



Haverhill Area Working Party 10 December 2009

Review of Parking Charges: 2010/2011

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider proposals for parking charges alterations in Haverhill for 2010/2011.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council undertakes a review of the parking charges for off-street car parks on an annual basis. Like all other fees and charges there is a need to keep parking charges under review in order to maintain a good quality service, keep pace with rising costs (staffing and maintenance) and to minimise the pressure on the council tax. The variation in car park charges is also aimed at ensuring parking occurs in the most appropriate location for the length and type of stay.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 A number of proposals have been prepared for consultation with local stakeholders. The proposals being considered are set out below:-

(a) **increase all charges by 10p; and**

(b) **introduce charging on Sundays**

A table of the current and proposed charges is set out at Appendix A.

- 3.2 The rationale and possible impact of the proposals is set out below:-

3.2.1 Increase Charges by 10p

Rationale:-

(a) there have been no changes to the short stay charges since 2008;

(b) the increased retail and leisure offer in the town has impacted on demand and an increase in charge will help to manage this demand and influence parking so it occurs at the most appropriate car park; and

(c) even with the proposed increases the charges will remain low by regional comparison.

3.2.2 Introduce Charging on Sundays

Rationale:-

- (a) on weekdays drivers are influenced to park in the most appropriate car park through the charges levied. The increasing growth of Sunday trading and popularity of the town as a leisure destination has resulted in significant growth in parking demand. As a result there is the same need as on weekdays to manage where parking occurs; and
- (b) it is increasingly common for parking charges to be applied seven days a week and is the norm in other regional centres.

4. Consultation

The views of Haverhill Town Council, Haverhill Town Centre Management and Chamber of Commerce are being sought. These views, together with the views of this Working Party, will help to inform Cabinet in making a recommendation for car park charge changes for 2010/2011.

5. Community impact *(including Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and diversity issues)*

5.1 General

5.1.1 In setting any revision to car parking charges regard needs to be given to the current economic climate and likely impact on town centre users. The car park charges impact directly only on those who choose to use the car parks.

5.1.2 The off-street car parks represent a significant public investment and the council has always recognised the need to make a return on this investment with the principle that the user pays, rather than the car parks being funded by the council tax payer, many of whom are not car users. In view of this principle it is appropriate that a suitable return continues to be made on this use of public funds.

5.2 Diversity and Equality Impact *(including the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment)*

5.2.1 The main group for whom parking is important are those with a disability. In recognition that for many of this group the car is their main source of mobility, no charges are levied on blue badge holders in the off-street car parks whether or not these vehicles are parked in a designated disabled bay.

6. Sustainability Impact *(including environmental or social impact on the local area or beyond the Borough)*

6.1 Charging for car parking is an important element in demand management of travel behaviour. The fees encourage use of other modes of transport where there is a choice available to the traveller.

6.2 The changes to the differential charges within each car park reflects the need to manage parking to maximise the use of the available spaces, 'share the load' and ensure the drivers uses the most appropriate car park for their need.

7. Resource Implications *(including asset management implications)*

- 7.1 Increasing the revenue received from the off-street car parks recognises the need to make a suitable return on investment in these facilities. In setting charges regard has to be given to the wider economic implications. The recommendation maintains a suitable level of return and it is not anticipated it will adversely affect the economic viability of the town centre as a whole.
- 7.2 The introduction of Sunday charges will have a revenue implication for the Council as there are no staff currently employed on Sundays. Any additional costs can be funded from the income generated by Sunday charges.

8. Risk Assessment *(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)*

8.1

Risk area	Inherent level of Risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual Risk (after controls)
Income stream from the car park is potentially under pressure owing to external factors including market forces and current economic conditions.	Medium	Reviewing charges at this stage, keeping increases to those judged not to adversely affect users and the viability of the town centre.	Low

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 The views of the Working Party on the options outlined at paragraph 3.1 of Report A390 are sought in order to forward a recommendation to Cabinet when car parking charges for 2010/2011 are considered.

For further information, please contact:-

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APPENDIX A

Ehringshausen Way	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 4 hours	80p	90p
Over 4 hours	£1.60	£1.70

Lower Downs Slade	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 1 hour	20p	30p
Up to 3 hours	70p	80p

Town Hall	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 1 hour	20p	30p
Over 1 hour	£1.10	£1.20

Leisure Centre/Meadows	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 4 hours	80p	90p
Over 4 hours	£1.60	£1.70